



Soils Workgroup(s) Upper Silver Creek Watershed Stakeholders Group Starting Points

April 2000 Version - For Workgroup Discussion Only

BACKGROUND

Many areas of the Upper Silver Creek Watershed have areas of surface or near-surface soils (including exposed or near-surface mine waste) which are contaminated with heavy metals. These contaminated soils are a concern for two primary reasons:

1. If present in high enough concentrations and in areas where exposure is sufficiently frequent, heavy metals in soil can cause a variety of health effects in humans. The same can be said of effects to land animals, though the concentrations and exposure frequency may be different.
2. Metals in soils can leach via precipitation and runoff to both surface water and ground water. Thus, contaminated soils must be considered a potential source of contamination to surface and ground water.

Many past investigations have shown that contaminated soils exist within the watershed. Most of these investigations were site-specific and provided only limited information regarding the nature and extent of the contamination. These investigations were focused on priority areas that were suspected or known to be contaminated. Many areas of the watershed have never been sampled. Further work is certainly required to better define the extent of the contamination across the entire area. Additional work may be required to better understand the nature of the contamination as well.

Soil contamination within the watershed is widespread. Past investigations have shown contaminated soils exist at Richardson Flats, Prospector Square, the former Marsac Mill Site, the former Ontario Mill Site, and at many mining and milling sites in the mountains above town. There are contaminated soils, sediments, and tailings deposits along most of Silver Creek. Past practices in Park City (such as smokestack emissions, poor drainage control, and use of contaminated material as fill) may have served to spread the contaminated soils to areas which did not directly host mining activities as well. Therefore, this is not an isolated circumstance, but rather a problem the entire watershed faces.

CURRENT SITUATION

There are three primary circumstances, or starting conditions, for the watershed:

1. Areas currently covered by the Park City Soils and Landscaping Ordinance where soil

sampling and/or remediation has taken place. This includes Prospector Park, Prospector Village, and other areas extending into downtown. In general, especially for Prospector, this area is completely developed, was well sampled in the past, and is covered with a layer of clean soil. Here the challenge is ensuring the remedy worked, verifying there is no health problem, and finding ways to ensure the situation remains protective over the long-term.

2. Areas not covered by the Ordinance where some sampling may or may not have taken place and development has occurred. This includes many areas of Old Town, much of downtown, and other areas. In general, this area has never been sampled and no remediation has occurred. Here the challenge is pinpointing the areas of contamination (down to individual homes) and deciding on a way to deal with the contamination.
3. Areas not covered by the Ordinance where soil sampling may or may not have taken place and where no development has occurred (United Park has performed a significant amount of sampling). This includes most of the area of the mountains and canyons above town as well as Richardson Flats and some of the Silver Creek flood plain. Here the challenge is finding the areas of contamination and structuring future development to ensure it is safe.

PLAN AND SPECIFIC ISSUES

EPA suggests three small working groups be formed to explore and address the issues particular to each circumstance above. These groups will have overlapping members. Each organization below (ie EPA) can bring who they feel necessary to meetings, etc. Periodically, the larger stakeholder group will become involved to ensure continuity and consistency (among soil issues and with other issues such as surface water). The working groups won't take action until the larger group is consulted. Members may change and additional organizations may be brought in to deal with specific issues. Each group will eventually sort out how it will function.

Initially, the groups will meet without facilitation. If facilitation services are ultimately required, it can be added to CDR's contract. Each group will have a "driver" organization, responsible for leading the effort. (EPA has largely functioned as the "driver" for the general stakeholders group in its early stages).

GROUP 1 (Developed, Ordinance):

Suggested core members: EPA, UDEQ, Summit County Health, Park City Municipal, 3 diverse citizen reps from Prospector Park, 2 citizen reps from areas covered by ordinance outside of Prospector Park.

Other as-needed members: Board of Realtors, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), State Health Department

Suggested Driver: Park City Municipal

Issues: EPA has stated its concerns with the Ordinance (see attached). This group needs to

attempt to find a solution to those issues so that Prospector can be removed from the Superfund database. Group also needs to find a way to interact with Prospector Park and Village citizens as a whole.

Suggested Initial Process: Initial face to face, round table (evening?) meetings beginning in May/June. These can be worked around the upcoming general stakeholder meetings. I suggest three separate three hour meetings in a relatively short time period to get the issues on the table. Meeting 1: EPA/UDEQ present and explain their concerns and goals. Meeting 2: Other stakeholders present a well-thought out discussion of their concerns and ideas. Meeting 3: Discuss likely ways to move forward and how to achieve them.

GROUP 2: (Developed, No Ordinance):

Suggested core members: EPA, UDEQ, Park City Municipal.

Other as-needed members: Smaller neighborhood association reps (others depend largely on how this unfolds - too early to tell)

Suggested Driver: EPA/UDEQ

Issues: The key issue here is making a plan to determine which areas which are contaminated and making a plan with how to deal with them. Citizen involvement will be required but I think it is too soon at this point to have general citizenry on the panel. Must start simple. This effort may be controversial and highly visible, so there are crucial community involvement & stigma issues to manage before we start work.

Suggested Initial Process: One working meeting in May/June to decide on general direction. If successful, EPA & UDEQ prepare draft strategy for moving forward presentation at next meeting.

GROUP 3 (Undeveloped, No Ordinance):

Suggested core members: EPA, UDEQ, United Park City Mines, Deer Valley, Park City Mountain Resort, CARG.

Other as-needed members: BLM, State Parks

Suggested Driver: UPCM

Issues: Development must be integrated into investigation and cleanup. This largely involves coordination between UPCM and EPA/UDEQ, which is underway.

Suggested Initial Process: One organizational meeting in the near term. A synopsis of information available and current plans should be presented. Next step would be for UPCM to present plans and ideas for moving forward on specific areas at next meeting.